

FILM

WALKER ART CENTER

October 1978

The Cinema of Jean Cocteau and Georges Franju

The films of Jean Cocteau and Georges Franju have been described as poetic and surrealistic. Whether legendary or mythological, historical or contemporary in setting, the films are involved in a high degree with fantasy and mystery, with dream functioning as reality and reality as dream. Although the sources for their films were often literary (Franju's **Thomas The Imposter** is based on Cocteau's novel), they are both considered to be especially cinematic directors, developing the conventions and inherent properties of the medium to its fullest extent. Here, however, the similarities end, for each director comes out of an opposing tradition in cinema: Cocteau from the theatrical and conjuring tradition of Melies, and Franju from the documentary tradition of the Lumiere brothers.

Les Parents Terribles (1948)
10 Oct.
7:30 & 9:15 pm

Directed by Cocteau, based on his play, "Photog." A study of a neurotic middle-class family, it is a tragi-comedy of tangled family relationships, filled with melodramatic confrontations, incorporating deliberately shocking elements (suicide and incest) and a plot of vaudeville complexity. With Jean Marais, Yvonne de Bray, Gabrielle Dorziat, Marcel Andre, Josette Day. 86 minutes.

Beauty and The Beast (1946)
13, 14 Oct.
8 pm

Cocteau brings his film art into the supernaturally unclosed world of the fairy tale. Beauty (Josette Day) saves her father (Marcel Andre) by giving herself to the Beast (Jean Marais). Because she loves him, he is transformed into a handsome prince. 90 minutes.

Orpheus (1949)
17 Oct.
7:30 & 9:15 pm

Broadly derived from Cocteau's first play (1926), this modern version of the legend of Orpheus (Jean Marais) and Eurydice (Maria Dea), their involvement with Death (Maria Casares), the "angel" Heurtebise (Francois Perier), Cegeste (Edouard Dhermit), and the bacchantes. The film is replete with poetic tricks—the mirrors, the messengers of Death dressed in black leather and riding motorcycles, and especially the creation of an imaginary town out of Paris locations. 95 minutes.

Les Enfants Terribles (1950)
18 Oct.
7:30 & 9:15 pm

Directed by Jean-Pierre Melville, based on the novel by Cocteau, with a screenplay by Cocteau. A chamber drama about incest and love sickness with Nicole Stephane and Edouard Dhermit.

Therese Desqueyroux (1962)
19 Oct.
8 pm

Directed by Franju, based on the novel by Francois Mauriac. The story of a woman (Emmanuele Riva) who tries to kill her husband in order to escape the suffocation of family ties, materialism and the mediocrity of her marriage. She is not convicted but is instead isolated and imprisoned in her room by her husband (Phillipe Noiret). 120 minutes.

Judex (1963)
21 Oct.
7:30 & 9:30 pm

Franju's tribute to the remarkable serials of Feuillade. This film has much the same lyrical feeling for the beauty of nature and the same love of disguise and shameless dependence on wildly improbable coincidence as the original serial of 1916. The elements of fantasy and primitive science fiction are there in exactly the right proportions. 100 minutes.

Thomas the Imposter (1965)
24 Oct.
8 pm

Directed by Franju, based on the novel by Cocteau. Princesse de Bormes (Emmanuele Riva) is a mad Polish princess prowling around Paris during World War I. She enlists the aid of Thomas, who is masquerading as the nephew of a great general, to operate a private Red Cross service. Franju's film vividly captures the essence of Cocteau's novel, the almost fairy-tale fantasy of figures moving in a mystical land where everything seems to be predetermined, where actions cease to be voluntary assertions of will and become puppet reactions controlled by a distant hand pulling the strings amid the dehumanized trappings of an infernal machine. 94 minutes.

La Faute de L'Abbe Mouret (1970)
25 Oct.
8 pm

Directed by Franju, based on the novel by Emile Zola. A splendid version of Zola's novel on the tribulations of the priesthood, and how excessive adoration of the Virgin leads one young cleric into sin. 94 minutes.

Shadowman (1974)
29 Oct.
7:30 & 9:15 pm

Another tribute to the serial by Franju. Shadowman is a ruthless but brilliant criminal hired to uncover the fabulous treasure of the Knights Templar. The film has been described as having more action per square inch than a season of Captain Marvel. 90 minutes.



Beauty and the Beast



Judex

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Rediscovery

Rediscovery is an ongoing series of films that allows for the re-evaluation of individual facets of the international cinema. Some of these films haven't been given proper attention in the history books, others have only recently been made available for review. **Rediscovery** will embrace films from a variety of origins, and in its concentration on important but neglected films, it promises to be both an entertaining and historically instructive series.

Rediscovery programs will take place on Saturday afternoons. (Additional screenings will be added if needed.) In October, the programs will consist of comical fantasy films from three different countries.

The Fabulous Baron Munchausen (1962)
7 Oct.
1 pm

The Fabulous Baron Munchausen is one of Czech director Karel Zeman's most brilliant films employing his own style of combining live action and puppet animation. Based on the 19th century German novel by G. A. Burger, Zeman's film delightfully visualizes the fantastic boasts of Baron Munchausen.

For his background settings, Zeman was inspired by Gustave Dore engravings, and his use of stylized color adds to the realization of a wonderful fantasy world. 87 minutes.

Voyage Surprise (1946)
14 Oct.
1 pm

Voyage Surprise is one of the most underrated French film classics. In this wild farce by Pierre and Jacques Prevert, an old eccentric takes a group of tourists on a surrealist, magical mystery tour that follows only his whims. With Maurice Baquet, Martine Carol, Etienne Decroux, Brevant Caccia. 108 minutes.

Heaven Can Wait (1943)
Friday, 20 Oct. 8 pm
and
Saturday, 21 Oct. 1 pm

Heaven Can Wait (1943) bears the title, but not the story, of the current remake of **Here Comes Mr. Jordan**. However, this great, only recently available, Ernst Lubitsch classic has a splendidly sophisticated touch of its own. A Turn-of-the-Century rake (Don Ameche) presents himself at Lucifer's (Laird Cregar) office because, in life, that was where people had so often told him to go. Lucifer's not so sure, so they review his relationships with family and friends, played by Gene Tierney, Charles Coburn, Marjorie Main and Eugene Pallette. **Heaven Can Wait** was Lubitsch's last collaboration with screenwriter Samson Raphaelson (**Trouble in Paradise**, **The Shop Around the Corner**) and the great director's only film in color.

Halloween Special

Island of Lost Souls (1933)
Curse of the Demon (1957)
31 Oct.
8 pm

Island of Lost Souls, adapted from H. G. Wells' "The Island of Dr. Moreau," remains one of the most strangely fascinating horror films of its period. Exiled on a lonely South Sea island, Dr. Moreau (Charles Laughton) performs elaborate surgical experiments on animals in an attempt to accelerate the evolutionary process. The consequence of Moreau's obsessed labors is a horrifying collection of half-human monstrosities who populate his island and regard him as a wrathful god. With Richard Arlen, Bela Lugosi, Kathleen Burke. 70 minutes.

The plot of **Curse of the Demon** (1957), directed by Jacques Tourneur, hinges on an ancient parchment inscribed with symbols which have the power to summon primeval evils and demonic ghouls from places outside of time and space. Prosaic situations are turned into nightmares as Tourneur conducts the spectator together with his hero (Dana Andrews) along the path from skepticism to uncertainty to terror. 95 minutes.

Admission to the double feature is \$3.00 (WAC Members, students with I.D.s, senior citizens \$2.00).

University Community Video

University Community Video is a five year old television production and training center at the University of Minnesota. UCV produces "Changing Channels," a weekly video magazine broadcast on KTCA-TV, the Twin Cities' local public television station. The Art Center will show two of their most recent tapes in the Information Room. The directors will discuss their work with the audience after the showings. Admission is \$1.00

A Common Man's Courage
A Man Writes to a Part of Himself
3 Oct.
7:30 pm

A Common Man's Courage produced by Jim Milligan and John DeGraaf is a 45-minute biography of John T. Bernard, an Iron Range Radical Congressman from Minnesota during the late 30s. Black and white.

A Man Writes to a Part of Himself produced by Greg Pratt and Mike Hazard. A lively blend of poetry and conversation with Minnesota poet Robert Bly. 55 minutes. Color.

Visiting Filmmakers: Mark Rappaport

Mark Rappaport is an American independent filmmaker whose four scripted feature-length films made between 1972 and 1978 have been shown widely at European film festivals and have just begun to reap critical acclaim in the U. S. His melodramatic stories take place in claustrophobic settings and involve characters bound by familial ties, sexual obsessions and infidelities, inescapable pasts and shared dreams. The melo-drama of the plots is undercut by both monologues and dialogues delivered dead-pan in elaborately stylized settings using intentionally artificial combinations of back projection, mirrors, and painted, filmed or photographed backdrops. The films are beautiful to look at and are filled with ironic humor. Often compared to Fassbinder, Rappaport is surely the most original new American filmmaker of the last five years.

Local Color (1977)

4 Oct.
8 pm

"It is melodrama stripped bare, drained of the heavy breathing we associate with soap operas. Told with elliptical conciseness, it combines the heavy fruity passions of the old cinema with the understated, often unstated, chilliness of the new cinema." Mark Rappaport. 116 minutes.

The Scenic Route (1978)

6 Oct.
8 pm

A story of two sisters and the man caught between them which has all the standard components of melodrama, but a very "dry" melodrama. Expectations are thwarted and rechanneled. Instead of explanations and motivations, visual counter-parts are offered. A film about myths and myth-making, about the Madame Bovary in each of us. 76 minutes. Mark Rappaport will introduce the film and discuss it with the audience.



The Scenic Route

Richard Schmidt

Richard Schmidt's second feature-length film, **Showboat 1988: The Remake**, was the hit of the Ann Arbor Film Festival this year. Financed with a grant from the American Film Institute, **Showboat 1988** recounts the fictitious tale of a middle-aged librarian's attempts to make the film musical, **Showboat**, in contemporary terms. The auditions are arranged on a San Francisco stage, and range from incredible to merely bizarre. Schmidt, under the remake pretext, actually enticed Bay area would-be performers to these auditions which for the most part are "Amateur Hour" material, tap-dancing turtles and nuns and nudists. These frequently hilarious acts form the core of the film. Since San Francisco tv stations picked up on the

auditions, Schmidt managed to obtain their tapes and mix his footage with their interviews. The actual and the staged are often confused, and the layers of references pile up. Schmidt, in effect, had made a film about the remake of a film. In addition to showing **Showboat 1988**, the Art Center will also show the 1936 version of **Showboat**. Richard Schmidt will introduce and discuss his film with the audience.

Showboat (1936)
26 Oct.
8 pm

Directed by James Whale. With Irene Dunne, Paul Robeson, Helen Morgan, Allan Jones and Hattie McDaniel. 113 minutes.

Showboat 1988: The Remake (1978)
27 Oct.
8 pm 94 minutes.



Showboat 1988

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